

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 14880 071450Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----129093 072007Z /66

R 071445Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8032
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMCONSUL BELIZE

S E C R E T LONDON 14880

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, BH, GT, UK
SUBJECT: BRITISH VIEWS ON BELIZE

REF: GUATEMALA 5591

1. DURING COURSE OF CALL ON FCO DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY CORTAZZI FOR ANOTHER PURPOSE, HE TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO TELL DCM THAT HMG EXPECTS GUATEMALA TEAM HEADED BY HERRERA TO RAISE ISSUE OF BELIZE BOUNDARY IN SEPTEMBER 15-16 VISIT TO LONDON. CORTAZZI WISHED US TO KNOW THAT FRONTIER DRAWN ON MONKEY RIVER OR LINE WHICH WOULD LEAVE PUNTA GORDA AS ENCLAVE WOULD BE ENTIRELY UNACCEPTABLE TO BRITISH. THUS, BORDER DRAWN SOUTH OF PUNTA GORDA, ESSENTIALLY ALONG MOHO RIVER BUT WITH MINOR ADJUSTMENTS HERE AND THERE IF THEY WOULD SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE, IS ONLY POSSIBLE COMPROMISE WHICH HMG COULD CONSIDER.

2. CORTAZZI SAID THAT EVEN BORDER BASED ON MOHO WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SELL TO PRICE AND THAT HMG COULD NOT INITIATE SUCH A PROPOSAL OVER BELIZE'S OBJECTION. HOWEVER, IF A SETTLEMENT ON THESE TERMS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO GUATEMALA, FCO MINISTERS WERE WILLING TO MAKE EFFORT
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IN ORDER TO SEE ISSUE FINALLY RESOLVED. SINCE NONE OF THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED COULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO ADVANCE SUCH A COMPROMISE, IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY FOR A THIRD PARTY TO ACT AS DEUS EX MACHINA. IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTION WHETHER A CARIBBEAN COUNTRY MIGHT PLAY THIS ROLE, CORTAZZI EXPRESSED DOUBT AND CLEARLY INTIMATED THAT ONLY THE U.S. HAD ENOUGH CLOUT.

3. CORTAZZI HOPED THAT U.S. WOULD PRESS PRESIDENT LAUGERUD DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO BE FLEXIBLE AND WORK TOWARD MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION OF BELIZE DISPUTE. HE SAID HMG "HAS DONE ITS DAMNDEST" TO SATISFY U.S. INTERESTS IN SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THIS OLD PROBLEM, AND SOME U.S. HELP ALONG ABOVE LINES MIGHT BE NEEDED NOW. IF NOT SETTLED SOON BY AGREEMENT WITH GUATEMALA, HE OPINED THAT BRITISH GRANT OF INDEPENDENCE TO BELIZE WITHOUT RESOLUTION OF BOUNDARY DISPUTE WAS PROBABLY ONLY ALTERNATIVE LEFT TO HMG.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON RESPONSE TO CORTAZZI BY SEPTEMBER 14.

BREWSTER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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